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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/732,931	12/11/2003	Hong-Gun Kim	5649-1224	7254

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EXAMINER

GEORGE, PATRICIA ANN

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1765

DATE MAILED: 02/22/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.		Applicant(s)	
	10/732,931		KIM ET AL.	
	Examiner		Art Unit	
	Patricia A. George		1765	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-3 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 4-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Amendment

Amendments to claims were received 12/07/2005 and acknowledged. Claims 1-3 are canceled at applicants' request.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15 and 16 rejected under 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knorr et al. of USPN 6,531,377 in view of Hong et al. of USPN 6,593,207.

Knorr et al. disclosed a method for providing isolation by depositing anisotropic (ab.) insulative materials between high aspect ratio trenches (col.2, l.43-54).

In figures 2-7 Knorr illustrates forming isolation trenches (111). Knorr illustrates depositing a hard mask layer (114/122) over the substrate (112), using a photo/etch process (col.4, l.3-9), which is written on forming the gap in the substrate through a hard mask thereon prior to forming the first material in the gap, as in claim 4, 11, and

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12; and forming a pattern to define a gap on a substrate, as in claims 9 –11; Knorr teaches the hard mask is removed after the insulative fill material is produced and polished by CMP (col.6, l. 7-10), as in claims 11 and 12. After forming the trench in the substrate, Knorr deposits a sidewall oxide (121); a silicon nitride liner (125), which is discussed in col. 4, para. 2-3; Knorr forms a bottom oxide layer on a surface of the substrate substantially filling the gap and etching back the bottom oxide layer inside an opening in the gap to expose side walls of the gap so that a residual bottom oxide layer remains at a bottom of the gap and teaches the preferred material for the first insulative layer at the bottom of the gap is an oxide, which illustrates selectively growing the layer (Col.4, line 27), as in claim 9; the first material further comprises avoiding forming the first material on the side wall nearer the opening in the gap, shown in figure 8, as in claim 2; and conformably depositing a silicon nitride layer liner on a surface of the substrate including on the side walls of the gap, as in claim 10. Knorr illustrates depositing a top layer such as 130 of figure 7, 230 of figure 9, or 326 of figure 11, and teaches use of an anisotropic HDP-CVD process for one to four (see claims 1-3) insulative fill materials (co.5, para.5), which illustrates selectively depositing a top oxide layer on the residual bottom oxide layer, as in claims 9 and 16.

Knorr discloses an aspect ratio of 3:1 or greater (col.6, l.40), which encompasses the claimed range of the gap depth at least about eight times greater than a width of the gap, as in claim 7.

As to claims 15, Knorr anticipates the first insulating material (116) in a thickness of approximately 300 nanometers, which converts to 3000 angstroms, encompassed by the claimed range of between about 100 Angstroms and about 3600 Angstroms.

Knorr failed to teach the bottom oxide layer "only" at a bottom gap, as in claim 16.

Hong et al. illustrates a bottom insulative oxide layer, only at bottom of gap in figures 6-11B.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention was made, to modify the invention of providing isolation by depositing anisotropic (ab.) insulative materials between high aspect ratio trenches, as Knorr, by forming the bottom insulative layer only at bottom of the gap, as Hong, because Hong et al. teaches forming the lower liner prevents impurities from the above layer from diffusing into the semiconductor substrate, making the product more stable.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 6, 8, 13, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knorr and Hong (see discussion above) in view of Yao of USPN 5,716,890, evidenced by USPN 6,177,698.

Knorr teaches insulative films through HDP CVD processing, does not explicitly teach the use of ozone activated TEOS or the process parameters that might be selected for TEOS deposition, as in claims 6, 8, 13, and 14.

As for claims 6, 8, 13, and 14, Yao teaches a method for fabricating an interlayer, insulating film, which includes HDP CVD deposition that uses ozone (col.4, l.57-60) in a range between 3500 to 6000 sccm (col.4, l.65), which demonstrates "a method wherein the rate of the first rate is about four times greater than the second rate", as evidenced by column 2, lines 54-59, of USPN 6,177,698. Yao teaches a process pressure in a range between about 400 torr and 600 torr (col.4, l.67) which is encompassed by the claimed range of 200 torr and about 760 torr, as in claim 13; introducing a TEOS to the environment at a rate in a range between about 200 and 4000 mg/min (col.5, l.1-2) as in claim 8; at a temperature in a range between about 360.degree. C. to 440.degree. C. which is encompassed and overlaps the claimed range of 400.degree. C. to 480.degree. C. as in claim 13. Yao does not use the same unit of measurement when teaching the amounts of TEOS and ozone, but Yao teaches very broad ranges for both materials, which appears to overlap a concentration of ozone between 1% and 18% by weight, as in claim 8 and 14.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention was made, to specify the method of forming ozonized TEOS, of Yao, in the invention which discloses a method for high aspect ratio gap filling using HDP-CVD, of Knorr, because Yao teaches an improved structure and process for forming a layer that can fill narrow trenches, provide planar surfaces, have low stress, and good moisture resistance, which improves the reliability of semiconductor devices.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Knorr and Hong (see discussion above) in view of Hung et al. of USPN 6,190,999.

Knorr failed to teach a method of removing the hard mask from the substrate prior to forming the first material in the gap.

Hung et al. teaches an improved method of STI formation, which includes removing the hard mask from the substrate prior to forming the first material in the gap. See figures 2A through C and column 3, lines 25-30.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention was made, to modified the invention which discloses a method for high aspect ratio gap filling using HDP-CVD, of Knorr, to remove the hard mask before depositing a trench fill, as in Hung, because Hung teaches the an improvement that increases the filling performance and prevents defects and improves adhesion of the subsequent layers which will reduce overall manufacturing cost.

Response to Amendment

New grounds of rejection presented in this office action are submitted to overcome the amendment of claim 16.

Conclusion

Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

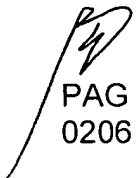
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Patricia (Patty) George whose telephone number is (571) 272-5955. The examiner can normally be reached on weekdays between 7:00am and 4:30pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Nadine Norton can be reached on (571) 272-1465. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


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Patricia A George
Examiner
Art Unit 1765


NADINE G. NORTON
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER